

# Aborigines Act Amendment Act 1936, Western Australia

1936 – 1964

**Other Names:** • Native Administration Act 1936

## Details

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The Aborigines Act Amendment Act 1936, also known as the 'Native Administration Act 1936', amended the Aborigines Act 1905. It created the Department of Native Affairs, and changed the title of Chief Protector to the Commissioner for Native Affairs. The Act also extended the powers of that role, especially as they affected children: the Commissioner was the legal guardian of all Aboriginal children to the age of 21, 'notwithstanding that the child has a parent'. The Native Administration Act 1936 was repealed by the Native Welfare Act 1963, which commenced on 1 July 1964.

The *Aborigines Act Amendment Act 1936* has been seen as a key instrument for extending the power of the Western Australian authorities in the lives of Aboriginal people in the State.

The 1936 Act extended the Chief Protector's powers in the new role of Commissioner, principally through its definition of the term 'native', which included all Aboriginal people defined as being of 'full' descent, and any descendants 'of less than full blood', including 'half-caste' and also 'quadroons' who were under the age of 21, and who lived with other 'natives'.

Henry Reynolds reflects that the 1936 Act gave the Commissioner, A. O. Neville, 'almost complete control over the the part-Aboriginal population' of Western Australia. With these powers, Neville aimed to realise his ambition to 'eliminate' the Aboriginal 'race' through a policy of assimilation, which included the removal of Aboriginal children from their families and their placement in Homes and 'service' (work).

## More info

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### Related Entries

#### Related Events

- [Royal Commission to Investigate, Report and Advise upon Matters in Relation to the Condition and Treatment of Aborigines 1935, State of Western Australia \(1934? - 1935\)](#)

Recommendations from the Mosely Royal Commission were implemented in the Native Administration Act 1936.

Date: 1935 -

#### Related Glossary Terms

- [Commissioner for Native Affairs \(WA\) \(1936 - 1954\)](#)

The *Aborigines Act Amendment Act 1936* changed the title of the Chief Protector to the Commissioner of

Native Affairs.

### Related Organisations

- [Department of Native Affairs, State of Western Australia \(1936 - 1954\)](#)  
*Aborigines Act Amendment Act 1936* created the Department of Native Affairs.

### Amends

- [Aborigines Act 1905, Western Australia \(1906 - 1964\)](#)  
The *Aborigines Act Amendment Act 1936* amended the *Aborigines Act 1905*, which remained the principal Act.

### Related Concepts

- [Aboriginal Protection in Western Australia \(c. 1832 - c. 1972\)](#)

## Resources

- McCorquodale, John, [The legal classification of race in Australia](#), Aboriginal History, 1986
- [Steps to Improve Lot of Natives in W.A.](#), The West Australian, 21 June 1949

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